EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1969

EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

With the compliments of the
Medical Officer of Health.

Council Offices,
Dover Road,
SANDWICH,
Kent.

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IN OFFICE

1969 - 1970

Chairman of the Council:	Councillor G. Bishop, J.P., C.C.
Chairman of the Public Health Committee.	Councillor E.J. Bishop.
Clerk of the Council:	W. Wilmott, Esq.
Chief Public Health Inspector:	W.H. Sayers, Esq., M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
Surveyor:	R.H. Ruston, Esq., A.M.I.Mun.E., M.I.P.H.E.
Treasurer:	C.L. Wilson, Esq., A.C.C.S. (Part) M.C. Nott, Esq. A.I.M.T.A., F.R.V.A. (Part)
Medical Officer of Health:	Dr. Malcolm Smith Harvey, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Deputy Medical Officer of Health:	Dr. James Leslie Gordon, O.B.E., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Major General, Retired).

The Chairman and Members of
Eastry Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

The opportunity was taken in presenting the annual report for 1968 to comment on the present and future position of the Public Health Inspector in relation to Local Government Reform. What then of the medical officer of health? The green light has not yet been given for change, but views favour his separation from local government. Without a doubt the pioneer work of his predecessors in partnership with other sanitarians has changed the community conditions to such an extent by the improvement of living conditions, reduction of infectious disease and upgrading of hygiene in food handling and preparation that to cling to old arrangements could only be justified by a search for reasons or excuses for the survival of the obsolescent. But some of that obsolescence has arisen from other changes, especially the establishment of a national health service which failed to combine the many aspects of medical care, but instead channelled them into three separate parts. It is in the cure of this division that the medical officers of health must accept change, and generally favour it. The century old title is likely to give place to that of community physician, but that change will be more than in name. Community medicine is described by the Royal Commission on Medical Education (Todd Report) as "the specialty practised by epidemiologists and "by administrators of medical services, e.g. medical officers of local "authorities, central health or other government departments, hospital "boards or industry and by staffs of corresponding academic departments. "It is concerned not with the treatment of individual patients but with the "broad questions of health and disease in, for example, particular "geographical and occupational sections of the community and in the "community at large.

" In community medicine the doctor has no monopoly of respon-"sibility or of contribution. Many other people's skills are also required. "Indeed, in some fields such as environmental control, the pioneering "activity which first brought organised community health services into "being, day-to-day responsibility has largely passed out of medical hands. "Nevertheless, medical leadership in community medicine is as important as "ever. Specialist training and practice in this branch of medicine are "therefore essential."

This opinion is quoted because it justifies not only closer ties between sections of the medical profession concerned with the community, but it implies the necessity for some form of continuing association between the community physician and local government. It also makes one wonder why the Green Paper accepted a continuing separation of Occupational Health Services from the rest of the N.H.S. organisation.

How the reformed arrangements are to be shaped is yet to be disclosed for new hands have taken over the moulding. But the constant in such debate is the community, and with it the need for the community to be able to communicate its needs and to be accessible to guidance on health matters. One fears the remoteness that grows with the philosophy of "bigger and better". The prevention of isolation, especially of the elderly within the community is likely to call from the local community a greater involvement in self care and a greater parish spirit.

MALCOLM S. HARVEY

Medical Officer of Health.

EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT - 1969

The population of the Rural District increased very slightly by only 110 persons mainly accounted for by greater longlevity if one takes into account the 16% percentage of elderly. This figure is culled from a source revised frequently through N.H.S. arrangements. The Birth Rate, adjusted for age grouping in the population fell slightly below the national rate being 16 per 1,000 compared to the 16.3 for England & Wales. The Death Rate was also below the national rate (10.9 local adjusted compared to 11.9 England & Wales), and the causes of death table shows that the year was gentle with the old and that a sharp fall in deaths due to pneumonia is seen.

In epidemiological matters both measles and whooping cough were less prevalent. It would be reasonable to credit vaccination with the improvement in the measles rate, for the programme in measles protection got under way during 1969 and staved off the expected epidemic in the two year cycle. The vaccine first supplied in this area was rather sharp in its reaction and was withdrawn and replaced by a mild strain fully acceptable. But bad news is remembered and reassurance has to battle with prejudice and apathy and the programme of measles vaccination received a setback from this early experience. Unfortunately, it may need an epidemic of measles to remind the parents of their duty to protect their children from a disease which contributes more harm to hearing and more continuing debility than any other common infection. The epidemic that was prevented may now be on the way.

SOCIAL ASPECTS.

Many may consider the Channel Tunnel more of a castle in the air than a mole drain for continental traffic, but local views were expressed as favourable because of the employment prospects that would result for those in the rural mining areas which seem to have an uncertain future. As the Government view seemed to oppose local growth of population or industry associated with the tunnel, there was justification for local optimism.

The withdrawal of the Helicoptor rescue service from Manston caused some dismay despite assurances that it would be available from a base in Essex. The service had been such a friend to those in trouble and a comfort to the locals by its constant presence that the community felt the breach rather personally.

The County's policy on conservation areas surprisingly expressed concern only over Wingham, and it is thought that Barfrestone should be considered for future designation.

The obscurity of house numbering again brought comments from the doctors and other health service workers who may need to find an address in a hurry. As suggested in my 1968 report, there is an appropriate standard of size and clarity in the car number plate which is visible at 25 yards to any driver properly licensed to drive, and this could with advantage be the standard used by householders and housing authorities for house numbering.

The Council found a conflict between the planned growth of Eastry and the local health authority decision to reduce the frequency of child health clinic sessions in the village. Paradoxically the growth in population had been accompanied by a drop in clinic attendances.

The Council were recipients of complaints about the inadequacy of the Waiting Room accommodation in the Aylesham doctors Surgery, of which the Council is landlord, and raised with the Executive Council the question of a health centre for the township. The Council has now agreed to extend the property with resultant improvement.

HOUSING.

Another 132 houses were taken over from the National Coal Board (530 to date) with the prospect of another 100 coming over in 1970. Private builders added 146 dwellings and the Council built 29 dwellings in the year. Mention was made in the previous report of condemned houses remaining occupied, especially by elderly persons. The total was reduced to 17 by the end of 1969.

Twelve houses were reported under Section 16 as unfit and not capable of being rendered fit at reasonable expense.

Details of action taken under the Housing Acts.

Demolition Orders made	4
Closing Orders made	3
Unfit houses demolished	6
Families displaced by Housing Act action	18
Persons in these families	31
Unfit houses made fit by owners after informal action	45
Number of these previously subject to a demolition order	4
Number of these previously subject to a closing order	1
Houses subject to a demolition or closing order still occupied at end of year	17
New Houses built by Council	29
New Houses built privately	146
Resulting increase in fit houses ...	220
Houses to be improved by standard grants	15
Houses to be modernised by discretionary grants	20

Again there were complaints of damp in Council houses which arose from the mode of living of the occupants. Condensation damp is a hazard in any house left unoccupied and sealed up throughout the day where both husband and wife go out to work. Automatic heating and ventilation control may overcome this, but for the majority thorough ventilation of the house to rid it of overnight humidity and that from cooking and washing is a necessary start to the day before closing the house to go to work.

WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply comes from the chalk and is moderately hard water of good quality chemically and bacteriologically. The fluoride level varies from 0.1 to 0.2 parts per million F. The non-carbonate hardness (permanent) varies from 40 to 90 p.p.m., according to source and the carbonate (temporary) hardness is between 215 to 235 p.p.m. carbonate.

An incident causing temporary pollution of local mains water occurred as the result of a fire tender on Manston Airfield accidentally discharging 500 gallons of fire foam into the mains in the course of refilling the tender. The foaming element is compounded of blood and hoof and the possibility of bacteriological impurity was a real fear. The accident was discovered on complaint of abnormal taste in water in the Queensdown Estate and the Thanet Water Board investigated and identified the source of trouble with reassuring alacrity. Householders were at once

warned to boil water used for drinking, the supply was cut off and tankers of water from outside the contaminated areas were brought in as a temporary supply. The mains were thoroughly flushed and chlorinated during the evening and were charged with 5 p.p.m. chlorinated water overnight. Storage cisterns were also cleansed. The Water Board's analyst was able to ascertain that the foaming agent by reason of its method of manufacture carried no risk of introducing water-borne infection, nor of chemical poisoning because of its taste in very low concentration which made its presence obvious. Within twenty-seven hours of the incident the mains had been thoroughly cleansed, the purity of the water and absence of bacteriological contamination confirmed, and the supply to Queensdown Estate was back to normal. Nevertheless, the use of fire foam tender with a mechanism that would allow such an accident to happen was a matter on which strong representations were made by the Water Board to the Service Department concerned.

The protection of the Woodnesborough water source from pollution arising in its gathering grounds was raised again by the Thanet Water Board. The Board's Engineer provided evidence from regular water sampling of the raw water that heavy rainfall influenced results and that pollution from overflowing cesspools was suspected as the source. The sewerage scheme for Woodnesborough and Beacon Lane will remove this risk but was being held up by delay in development of the Sandwich Sewerage Scheme to which the rural sewers will discharge.

The National Coal Board proposed to pipe the Tilmanstone mine water to the River Stour above Sandwich, to stop the hazard of salination to chalk water in the catchment area. As the river water in the area of discharge is used for irrigation of crops the farmers showed some apprehension. A report on the effect of the river water after addition of the mine water on growing crops was prepared by Professor Edelman, Professor of Botany, Queen Elizabeth College, University of London. This indicated that there was foundation for the farmers fears and the scheme is being reconsidered.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The authority to go to tender on the regional main drainage scheme was received. This comprehensive and ambitious scheme will sewer the villages of Preston, Elmstone, Wingham Well and Wingham Green, Staple, Nonington, Chillenden and Eythorne and will take over sewerage from the unsatisfactory sewage disposal plant at Elvington. The Dambridge Sewage Disposal Works at Wingham which at present serves Wingham, Adisham (in Bridge Blean R.D.), Aylesham, Goodnestone and Ash, will be extended to meet the additional load. Method of disposal will be an extension of the present system of sedimentation, biological filtration and humus tank settlement before discharge to the Wingham Stream and then to the Stour. Sludge will be dealt with by heated sludge digestion and sludge drying beds and disposed of agriculturally or in a controlled refuse tip. The effluent will be to Royal Commission Standard - 30 p.p.m. suspended solids and 20 p.p.m. B.O.D.

The sewage disposal arrangements for Snowdown Village were reported upon as defective. The treatment plant is to be brought back into order.

Safety amongst Sewer and Sewage Works staff was promoted by arranging for the instruction of personnel in resuscitation and other first aid by N.C.B. personnel at the Rescue Centre.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Following the report of a joint working party on an area refuse disposing scheme based on a pulverisation plant at Richborough, the Thanet and District Joint Committee for Refuse Disposal was established to include Eastry Rural District, Margate, Ramsgate and Sandwich Boroughs, and Broadstairs Urban District. The need for this development was emphasized by the unfortunate pollution of Sandwich Bay by refuse washed out of the Ramsgate Borough refuse tip on the foreshore of Pegwell Bay. It appeared to arise from an inadequate protective bund between the tip and the tidal reach which offered no protection to the scour of a very high tide. The tip would appear to have spread beyond the line of planning consent in a seaward direction.

POLLUTION.

The scheme for dealing with oil pollution made further progress with Kent County Council agreeing to meet costs beyond a ½d rate on clearing beaches.

Disposal of spoil from Betteshanger Colliery to the tipping area on Worth marshes caused nuisance in high winds from coal dust blown off the trucks of spoil. This complaint was taken to the Coal Board who are well acquainted with method and reason in coal dust suppression.

NOISE.

The Nationalised industries in the area were found to be fully co-operative on suppression of noise from pneumatic tools and road drills. It was decided by the Council to include a clause on noise suppression in all contracts after 1st August, 1969.

Examples of noise complaints are given on Page 7 of the Chief Public Health Inspector's report.

Man's ultimate tolerance of a new noise that becomes a regular part of the background is quite surprising. As with all nuisances or near nuisances the complaint may be generated by some other discontent than the complained of occurrence. Within the same community a noise will go unnoticed by the majority but will cause misery to a few persons or even only one person. There is not a critical level below which noise is not a nuisance or above which it is a nuisance. There is a level beyond which noise may be a physical hazard to hearing. This level is recognized in industry as requiring protective action - in pop or beat groups it is not, unless the mass of hair is an instinctive morphological protective development of the type, alas, unlikely to allay the hazard of hearing damage that will show itself in middle age.

Undoubtedly the noise that has the harshest emotional effect is the electronic reproduction of scared bird noises in the cherry orchards. There is a hate expressed, no doubt echoed by the cherry grower, which is as disturbing to the uninvolved listeners as the sound of riot and violence. I am of the opinion that, of all rural noises, this is the most hazardous to the peace of mind of the suburban dweller and it could well be considered as a noise to be banned.

SAFETY.

The development of the Spinney Lane, Aylesham Industrial Estate, led to discussions on joint first aid facilities for the factories within the development, between H.M. District Inspector of Factories, the Medical Officer of the Coal Board, the Clerk of the Council and the M.O.H. While no result of these discussions can yet be indicated, there is every hope that provision made on a joint basis will result, with benefit, in the standard of aid and premises provided.

Reference was made in the previous annual report to the hazard of disused wells. The Chief Public Health Inspector surveyed the rural district and identified 156 old wells, of which 25 were not fully safe. Kent River Authority and Thanet Water Board were kept informed of the result of the survey and owners were warned of action needed to prevent these unsafe wells from presenting an accident hazard.

OLD PEOPLE.

There was no need for formal action under Section 47, National Assistance Act, for any person during the year.

The W.R.V.S. Meals-on-Wheels service makes good progress. Just under 600 meals per quarter were being distributed in the rural district and besides the service in the Minster, Aylesham and Eastry areas, a service to Wingham area came into force during the year.

Little progress was made towards concessionary fares for old persons.

OTHER MATTERS.

There were no Hop Pickers camps occupied in the district, for all pickers are now of local origin transported to and from the gardens. Supervision of working conditions in these and other places of field work involved the Inspectors in136 visits.

Gypsies were again found to camp in Willow Wood, Sutton, at Poulton Farm, Ash, and at Worth, but all were there for short spells and moved on. There was still no settlement of a gypsy camp site in this or adjoining districts.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The development of Manston Airport as an occasional channel of importation of food, involved the Inspectors in irregular calls to inspect. There is now no slaughterhouse in the district but 475 lbs of meat was condemned after inspection at Wholesalers.

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You are referred to the Chief Public Health Inspector's Report for other details and to the following statistical statements and comments.

TABLES AND STATISTICS : EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT 1969

Population: 24,320 - increase of 110 over 1968.

Area: (unchanged) 54,276 acres. Dwellings 8878. Increase 144.

Percentage of Elderly persons: 16%

Births: Male: 174 Female: 172 Total: 346

Born outside marriage - 17. Illegitimate births as percentage = 5% (England & Wales 8%)

Birth rate per 1,000 population = 14.2 (England & Wales 16.3)

Local Adjusted Birth rate = 16.0

Standard population that would produce 346 births = 21,227 persons.

Stillbirths: 1.

Infant deaths: 9. All under 1 week old. (1968 = 7)

Perinatal Mortality Rate (Stillbirths & Infant Deaths under 1 week per 1,000 live and Stillbirths) = 29. (England & Wales 23).

Infant Mortality Rate (Infant deaths per 1,000 live births) = 26. (England & Wales 18).

All Deaths: 375. Male: 180. Female: 195.

Death Rate: 15.4 per 1,000 population.

Local Adjusted Death Rate = 10.9. England & Wales 11.9

Standard population that would produce 375 deaths = 31,513

Deaths of Children aged 1 - 14 = 4. (1 male, three female) (1968 = 4)

Adults age:	15 - 64	=	male 48	(47
			female 31 Total 79	(32 Total 79.
"	65 - 74	=	male 57	(72
			female 37 Total 94	(49 Total 121.
"	75 +	=	male 70	(100
			female 119 Total 189	(147 Total 247.

Comment:

The perinatal mortality rate is considered to be a sensitive index of social health and care and its continuing level above the national figure during the last two years may indicate a trend that, if it continues, will justify special attention from the local health services. It can only be seen as a trend, for statistics based on hundreds is no guide to rates measured by thousands.

The fall in death rate is seen to come from a fall in the number of deaths over age 65, especially in the 75+ group. It will be seen from the Causes of Deaths table that it was the old man's friend, pneumonia, as a cause of death in old age that declined sharply, only thirteen such deaths occurring in those of 75 years or over compared to the 44 such deaths in the senescent in 1968. It seemed, therefore, to have been a gentler year for the elderly than the previous year.

Causes of Death

Classification No.	Cause of Death.	Male Deaths. All	Male Deaths. 15-64	Male Deaths. 65-74	Male Deaths. 75+	Female Deaths. All	Female Deaths. 15-64	Female Deaths. 65-74	Female Deaths. 75+	Total 1969	Total 1968
4	Enteritis.	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-
18	Other Infec. & Parasitic Dis's.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
19(2)	Malignant Dis. Oesophagus.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
" (3)	" Stomach.	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	9
" (4)	" Intestine.	2	1	-	1	6	-	1	5	8	-
" (6)	" Lung & Bronchus.	11	6	4	1	2	-	-	2	13	17
" (7)	" Breast.	-				10	4	4	2	10	7
" (8)	" Uterus.	-				3	2	-	1	3	2
" (9)	" Prostate.	5	-	-	5	-				5	-
" (10)	" Leukaemia.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
" (11)	Other malignant Neoplasms.	11	6	3	2	6	3	1	2	17	29
20	Benign Unspecified Neoplasms.	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
21	Diabetes Mellitus.	2	-	-	2	2	1	-	1	4	4
46(1)	Other Endocrine Diseases.	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
23	Anaemias.	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1
46(2)	Other Diseases of Blood.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
46(3)	Mental Disorder.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
46(4)	Other Dis's. of Nervous Syst.	2	2	-	-	2	-	1	1	4	-
26	Chronic Rheumatic Heart Dis.	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	12
27	Hypertensive Disease.	3	1	-	2	4	-	2	2	7	7
28	Ischaemic Heart Disease.	47	13	21	13	46	6	12	28	93	87
29	Other Forms of Heart Dis.	8	1	2	5	29	1	2	26	37	42
30	Cerebro Vascular Disease.	27	5	9	13	19	3	5	11	46	64
46(5)	Other Dis's. of Cir.System.	9	1	3	5	18	2	2	14	27	28
31	Influenza.	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	1	3	12
32	Pneumonia.	8	-	2	6	11	-	4	7	19	51
33(1)	Bronchitis & Emphysema.	17	3	8	6	2	1	1	-	19	18
33(2)	Asthma.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
46(6)	Other Dis's. of Resp.Syst.	4	2	-	2	1	-	-	1	5	4
34	Peptic Ulcers.	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	3	6
35	Appendicitis.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
36	Internal obstruction & Hernia	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	2	3
46(7)	Other Dis's. of Dig. System.	1	-	-	1	2	1	-	1	3	4
38	Nephritis & Nephrosis.	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
39	Hyperplasia of Prostate.	1	-	-	1	-				1	2
46(8)	Other Dis's. Genito Urinary Syst.	2	1	-	1	2	-	1	1	4	3
46(10)	Dis's. Muscular Skeletal Syst	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	2	2
42	Congenital Anomalies.	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	4
43	Birth Injuries.Diff. Labour.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
44	Other Causes Perinatal Mortly	3	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	7	2
45	Symptoms.Ill def. conditions.	1	-	-	1	4	-	-	4	5	4
47	Motor Vehicle Accidents.	2	1	1	-	2	1	-	-	4	7
48	All other accidents.	3	1	1	1	3	-	1	2	6	7
49	Suicide & Self. Infl. Injrs.	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
50	All other External Causes.	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
	TOTAL	180	48	57	70	195	31	37	119	375	458

NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES 1969

Disease -	Measles	Whooping Cough	Scarlet Fever	Dysentery
Quarter 1	7	5	4	-
" 2	32	-	3	-
" 3	10	-	-	1
" 4	9	-	4	-
Age: Under 1	3	-	-	-
1 - 4	28	4	4	-
5 - 9	23	1	7	1
10-14	-	-	-	-
15 +	4	-	-	-
Total: 1969	58	5	11	1
1968	26	34	18	-
1967	326	25	5	-

Disease -	Food Poisoning	Infective Jaundice	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Other Tuberculosis
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-
" 2	-	-	1	-
" 3	2	1	-	-
" 4	-	-	1	-
Age: Under 5	1	-	-	-
5 - 9	-	1	-	-
10-14	-	-	-	-
15-44	1	-	1	-
45-64	-	-	1	-
65 +	-	-	-	-
Total: 1969	2	1	2	-
1968	2	6	3	2
1967	1	-	9	1

The Tuberculosis Register at the end of 1969 stood at:

Pulm. T.B.	Male:	47	Female:	34	Total:	81
Non-Pulm.	"	8	"	3	"	11

KENT COUNTY - IMMUNIZATION SCHEME

Protection Against.		Age Groups		Total.	Total.
		Under 5	5 - 16	1969	1968
Primary:	Diphtheria	108	5	113	296
	Whooping Cough	106	4	110	280
	Tetanus	108	26	134	350
	Poliomyelitis	278	-	278	442
	Measles	223	62	285	444
Re-inforcing:	Diphtheria	135	203	338	557
	Whooping Cough	97	34	131	247
	Tetanus	135	238	373	599
	Poliomyelitis	26	335	361	370
Smallpox:	Primary (under 3 years)	112	-	112	202
	Re-vaccination	-	1	1	3

EPIDEMIC VOMITING.

In a small primary school in a rural situation, roll 65, eighteen children suffered attacks of sickness between 5 p.m. 26th February and 5 a.m. on 27th February. These eighteen children were spread throughout the school and included non-school diners as well as those taking school dinners. The school dinner supply came from a kitchen supplying more than one school and the other schools were not involved. The head teacher was also involved in the explosive outbreak. Full ventilation of the school and sterilization of all crockery, cutlery and drinking cups, with disinfection of the drinking fountain, were carried out on the basis of it being an outbreak of winter vomiting disease. All but two children were back at school 28th February and only two further cases, a child and her mother, occurred 2nd/3rd March. Investigation found no departures from routine hygiene in the school dinner arrangements. While leaving this as an unexplained outbreak, it is interesting to recall that this little school had a history of such outbreaks in autumn and spring, or both, over a number of years until a few years ago.

SALMONELLA TYPHI-MURIUM.

A turkey farm suffered an outbreak of Salm. Typhi-Murium which killed ten percent of a large batch of turkey poults. The Animal Health Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food locally became aware of this only as the survivors were coming up to marketing standard. The farm were fully co-operative in withholding these birds until they could be cleared as safe by the Veterinary Officer.

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EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1969

REPORT BY THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

To the Chairman and Members of

EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my report on Environmental Health within the Eastry Rural District for the year 1969 and, in so doing, look back at that for 1949, a year when we were awaiting a visit of the first post-war Local Government Boundary Commission. In that year we find:

> There were two hundred and fifty-three houses with a well water supply; five hundred and eighty-nine were without sinks; one thousand lacked drainage and one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three had pail closets.
>
> Wingham, Eastry, New Street and Sandwich Road, Ash, Woodnesborough, Worth, Sholden, Monkton and St. Nicholas-at-Wade had no sewers.
>
> Only the larger villages had a weekly collection of refuse.
>
> Three small camping sites together had less than one hundred dwellings, mainly shacks and converted vans.
>
> There were thirteen retail dairies in the district and seventeen village bakehouses still in operation.
>
> We had two full-time rodent operatives whose activities during the year resulted in an estimated kill of over eight thousand rats with nine hundred bodies picked up.

As would be expected, a comparison with the present report shows many changes but, whatever may be the pattern of the future, there is satisfaction in seeing what progress has been achieved over the past twenty years.

I should again like to record my appreciation of the support and encouragement received from the Chairman and Members of the Council during the past year, and the co-operation from members of the Staff.

W. H. SAYERS

Chief Public Health Inspector.

MARCH, 1970.

HOUSING

It is pleasing to record that the efforts of the Housing Selection Committees to meet the problem of families living in condemned houses resulted in twelve such families being re-housed during 1969; but seventeen condemned houses were still occupied at the end of the year including a few long standing cases which it is hoped can be cleared during the coming year.

The completion of substantial repairs and improvements made it possible for the Council, under Section 24 of the Housing Act, 1957, to revoke five demolition and closing orders. While this section provides a useful means whereby worthwhile houses may be saved, there is a risk that, unless used with discretion, it can encourage efforts to retain for purely speculative purposes properties that are fit only for demolition, and at the same time involve the Council's officers in a vast amount of time which could be put to better use.

Formal action taken under the Housing Act, 1957.

No. of houses reported under Section 16 ... ... (i.e. not capable of being rendered fit at a reasonable expense)	12
No. of Demolition Orders made	4
No. of Closing Orders made	3
No. of houses demolished	6
No. of houses, subject to Demolition or Closing Orders in which proposals under Section 24 for repair and improvement were accepted. ...	4
No. of houses, subject to Demolition or Closing Orders repaired, improved and made fit for habitation and the Orders revoked. ...	5

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A new Housing Act, making fresh provisions for grant-aided improvements and conversions of houses came into operation on the 25th August, 1969. In anticipation of more generous grants the fall in applications experienced during 1968 continued until late in 1969 and, since the emphasis of the new legislation was on persuasion rather than enforcement, it is unfortunate that three months should have elapsed before publicity material was received for general distribution.

A keynote of the new legislation is greater flexibility, although the wider discretion given to local authorities in promoting improvements may, unfortunately, result in even more variation in the standards required by different authorities. Amongst new features is one whereby under certain circumstances grant-aided work can include repairs and replacements and there is no longer a condition to prevent the immediate re-sale of a dwelling after it has been improved with grant aid.

The provision in the Housing Act of 1964, which enables an individual tenant to make a representation to the local authority in order to secure standard improvements has been retained although, up to the present either through ignorance or apathy, little use has been made of it in this district.

Modernisation of houses with the aid of Grants.

Since 1954, the Council have actively encouraged a policy of voluntary house improvement by offering Grants, and by the end of 1969, Grants had been approved for a total of ONE THOUSAND AND THIRTY dwellings.

(a) Discretionary Grants - 1969.

No. of dwellings in respect of which Grants were approved ... 20
(Ten of these were owner/occupied and Ten tenanted)

Total cost of schemes approved:		£26,297 (Average per dwelling £1,314)
Amount ascribed to:	Improvements:	£21,180 (Average per dwelling £1,059)
	Repairs:	£5,117 (Average per dwelling £255)
Total of Grants approved:		£9,607 (Average per dwelling £480)

The maximum grant of £400 was approved in Six cases and after the Housing Act, 1969, came into operation, two grants of £1,000 were approved.

(b) Standard Grants - 1969.

FIFTEEN applications were approved, of which TWELVE were from owner/occupiers.

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WATER SUPPLY

There are 8,878 dwelling houses in the district, of which NINE only are now without a piped supply; one house only, which is subject to a demolition order, draws water from a standpipe.

Fifteen samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination from private wells and six of the sources gave unsatisfactory results. Eleven samples taken from public mains were reported as fit.

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SWIMMING POOLS

The number of swimming pools in the district continues to increase and, although we have no legislative controls over their use, advice and guidance is generally welcomed and twelve were regularly visited during the summer months. Fifty-six visits were made at which the pools were checked for clarity, chlorine content and alkalinity, and it is clear that for a pool/

pool to be kept in a satisfactory condition, calls for a degree of knowledge but above all, continued interest on the part of those responsible for its operation.

DRAINAGE AND SANITATION

Twenty-three more existing properties were connected to public sewers during the year, leaving nine in Monkton and thirty-nine in St. Nicholas-at-Wade still drained to cesspools and septic tanks.

In the district as a whole, thirty-nine pail closets were abolished and of the two hundred and nine shown on the summary table, nearly one half will disappear when the regional drainage scheme is completed.

PAIL CLOSETS

The following table shows the approximate number of Pail Closets existing in the various parishes at the end of 1969:-

Parish.	No. of Dwelling Houses.	Approx. No. of Dwelling Houses with Pail Closets.
ACOL	83	-
ASH	1004	20
AYLESHAM	1255	-
EASTRY	789	1
EYTHORNE	717	9
GOODNESTONE	142	16
MINSTER	1150	4
MONKTON	196	4
NONINGTON	259	28
NORTHBOURNE	283	6
PRESTON	246	19
RIPPLE	127	11
SARRE	45	3
SHOLDEN	254	1
STAPLE	166	17
STOURMOUTH	89	13
ST.NICHOLAS & WADE	307	-
SUTTON	310	8
TILMANSTONE	128	8
WINGHAM	599	13
WOODNESBOROUGH	387	26
WORTH	342	2
TOTAL:	8878	209

CARAVANS AND CAMPING

The use of land as a caravan site is controlled by the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960. Subject to certain exemptions, land may not be used as a caravan site unless the occupier of the land holds a site licence authorising the use of the land for that purpose.

Licence conditions were varied during the year to permit an increase in the number of holiday caravans on part of the Dog & Duck Caravan Site at Stourmouth from 40 to 45.

Site licences which have been issued by the District Council and are in force are as follows:-

Thanet's Caravan Park, Acol.	40 Holiday.
Frost Farm, St. Nicholas-at-Wade.	48 "
Smugglers Leap, Minster.	40 Residential.
Wayside, Minster.	54 Holiday.
Foxhunter Caravan Park, Monkton.	340 Holiday (28 Residential.
Dog & Duck, Stourmouth.	65 Holiday.
Sandhills, Sholden.	65 "
South London Holiday Camp, Sholden.	2 "
Sutton Vale, Sutton.	114 "
Invicta Sun Club, Sutton.	5 "
Old Fairground, Wingham.	6 Residential.

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Individual residential caravans.	2.

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Gypsies and Other Travellers.

From time to time travellers caravans settled on unauthorised land in various parts of the district - at one period there were fourteen caravans - but in deference to Ministry Circular 60/67 no enforcement action was taken, a course not altogether appeciated by nearby residents. In view of the disgusting conditions left behind by some departing travellers, it is hardly surprising that proposals to establish a permanent site provoke such opposition.

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The use of land for tented camping is outside the scope of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, and such control as exists in the Public Health Act, 1936, is outdated and ineffective. The standards now considered essential for caravan dwellers are surely equally necessary on tented camping sites but those critical of unsatisfactory conditions do not appreciate that local authority officers can only do what the law empowers.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961.

The District Council are responsible for the Sections of the Act relating to the provision and maintenance of sanitary conveniences in all factories, building operations and works of engineering construction. In addition, they administer the provisions relating to cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation and drainage of floors at factories without mechanical power.

Part I of the Act

1 - INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises. (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6, are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	5	6	1	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	60	93	3	-
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. (excluding out-workers' premises).	-	-	-	-
TOTAL:	65	99	4	-

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AGRICULTURAL (SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE PROVISIONS) ACT, 1956.

This is an Act to provide for the safety, health and welfare of persons employed in agriculture but the District Council are concerned only with that Section of the Act relating to the provision, maintenance and cleanliness of sanitary conveniences. It is found that the needs of field workers are still frequently overlooked and one hundred and thirty-six visits were made during the year.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963.

This Act provides for the health, welfare and safety of persons employed in offices, shops and certain railway premises.

As far as is known all premises in the district for which the local authority are responsible under the Act have been registered, and ninety-five received a general inspection during the year. The various types of premises registered are:-

Offices	32
Retail Shops	76
Wholesale Shops & Warehouses	1
Catering Establishments	8
Fuel Storage Depots	1

During the year, infringements of the Act and Regulations were found as follows:-

Lack of cleanliness	4
Inadequate temperature	5
Inadequate guarding of machinery	1
Absence of thermometer	9
Insufficient or unsuitable lighting	9
Inadequate ventilation	1
Worn and unsafe floors	5
Unsatisfactory sanitary accommodation or washing facilities	2
Absence of prescribed First Aid Materials ...	9
Absence of Abstract of the Act	2
Dangerous electrical equipment	4

An important provision of the Act is that which requires the occupier of any premises to which it applies, to notify the enforcing authority of any accident occurring on the premises, which causes the death of a person employed, or disables a person for more than three days from doing his usual work. One accident was notified in 1969 in which an Agricultural Storeman sustained back injuries.

It is a pleasure to record the continued co-operation and advice received from H.M. Factory Inspectorate in connection with this Act, and the value of the technical and administrative circulars issued on the working of the Act, set an example which would be welcomed from other Government Departments.

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SHOPS ACT, 1950.

This is a consolidating Act relating mainly to hours of Closing and Sunday Trading. So far as the welfare of shop assistants is concerned, it covers Statutory half holidays, meal times and the hours of employment of young persons. The District Council are responsible for functions under the Act under a delegation agreement with the County Council.

CLEAN AIR

Under Section 6 of the Clean Air Act, 1968, which came into operation on the 1st April, 1969, anyone installing a furnace which will burn 100 lbs of coal an hour, or the equivalent in other fuel, is required to submit details to the local authority and obtain approval to the height of the furnace chimney. This power, which is independent of the Building Regulations, includes the enlargement or replacement of existing furnaces and conditions may be imposed relating to the chimney height and/or the quality of emissions.

One application was received relating to a group of oil-fired boilers and a chimney height calculated in accordance with Ministry recommendations was agreed.

Liason is maintained with the Alkali Inspectorate of the Ministry of Housing & Local Government and on two occasions the District Inspector of Alkali was brought in when it was suspected that the Richborough Power Station might be responsible for a deposit found on growing field crops and on orchard fruit.

A section of the Tilmanstone Colliery Spoilbank which has been quiet for a number of years caught light when opened for the removal of shale, but prompt action was taken by the National Coal Board and the area was effectively sealed.

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NOISE

Although noise may be part of the price we are paying for progress, it is one of many developments which assault our environment and threaten the quality of our daily lives; no longer can anyone be assured of 'quiet enjoyment', even in the countryside.

Some idea of the variety of sources, even in a rural area, can be seen from the following complaints received in the past year, each of which in varying degrees interfered with the reasonable comfort of one or more people:-

Diesel generators under test.
A Donkey engine pumping dyke.
Pop music, etc. from a club.
A generator in glasshouses.
Electronic bird scarers.
Ventilation fans from broiler houses.
Grain drying plants.

Although reaction to nuisance from noise can be very personal and what is ignored by some can be unbearable to others, each of the above complaints was found to be substantiated, and whilst it is rarely possible to eliminate a source, every effort is made to reduce its effect to an acceptable level.

FOOD

Food premises in the Rural District which are subject to the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960, are as follows:-

Wholesalers:	3
Retail Food Shops:	126
Hotels, Cafes, Restaurants, Canteens:	64
Licensed Premises:	64
Poulterers:	2

Premises registered under Section 16, Food & Drugs Act, 1955.

For the sale of ice-cream	90
Fish Fryers	2
For the Manufacture of Sausages	15
For Ham Boiling	12

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There are 37 registered Milk Distributors and all milk is processed and bottled outside the district.

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Eight village bakehouses are still in use.

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Poultry:

There are two small poultry processing premises within the district processing approximately 2,500 turkeys and 16,000 broilers during a year. Slaughtering takes place at irregular times and intervals so that only limited examination of birds by Inspectors is practicable but there is a general oversight at routine visits to ensure that an effective system of scrutiny is maintained by the personnel engaged.

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General Food Inspection.

Six complaints of mould on food were received during the year; these are usually found to be due to a failure to practice proper stock rotation or lack of understanding of the shelf-life of wrapped foods.

There has been a long-standing argument over the question of date-stamping of pre-packed perishable foods, but, whatever objections there may be to stamping the actual date of production on wrappers, manufacturers of perishable goods have a duty to the public to ensure that any coding used can be clearly understood by the person selling the goods. If this is done, then the retailer is clearly responsible for seeing that no food is sold beyond the recommended "shelf-life".

The system of distributing perishable goods by van-salesmen has obvious weaknesses which can result in the delivery of out of date food and the manufacturers' responsibility in this cannot be resolved solely by relying on general instructions to their staff.

A more serious complaint related to a piece of metal found in a meat pie but, through lack of evidence this could not be pursued. A thorough investigation by the manufacturers failed to reveal how the foreign body could have passed the metal detector on the wrapping line.

A number of tins of imported luncheon meat were found to be perforated as a result of over heavy embossing of the code number and arrangements were made for all such tins to be withdrawn from sale.

Reputable manufacturers go to considerable lengths to ensure the fitness and safety of their products but failures can occur, not only in the factory but in the whole chain of distribution right up to the point of consumption and no one, including the consumer, is without some degree of responsibility. The positive gain from the above-mentioned cases is that faults have been brought to light and steps taken to prevent their recurrence; it is primarily for this reason that all such cases should be brought to the notice of the Public Health Department.

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The hygienic quality of food is largely controlled by the hygienic quality of the equipment with which it comes into contact and, with the aim of raising the standard of hygiene in food premises, we adopted during the year the "Agar Sausage" technique. This is a simple technique whereby any surface, instrument or utensil can be bacteriologically checked and the resultant bacterial growth can be shown to the food handlers concerned the following day. Its practical value is that, not only is it a check on the efficiency of the cleaning processes but the manner in which the results can be rapidly demonstrated serves to stimulate the interest of food handlers and so encourage efforts to achieve a high standard of cleanliness.

Ice-cream.

For several years sampling of ice-cream was discontinued as nothing but nationally produced and completely pre-wrapped ice-cream was sold in the district.

There has, however, been some change back to the sale of loose ice-cream which involves the retailer in maintaining hygienic conditions and satisfactory bacterial quality, and sampling has therefore been recommenced.

Results of Sampling:

Number taken:	Grade:			
	I	II	III	IV
11	11	-	-	-

THE IMPORTED FOOD REGULATIONS, 1968.

These are regulations for the protection of public health in relation to imported food and make it an offence to import food which is unfit for human consumption or is unsound or unwholesome. During the year eighty-one food flights into Manston Airport brought the following:-

Tomatoes	788 tons	19 cwt.
Beans:	205 "	19 "
Cherries:	29 "	14 "
Peaches:	30 "	
Pineapple:	22 "	14 "
Grapes:	23 "	2 "
Strawberries:	2 "	9 "
Clementines:	5 "	11 "
Vegetables:	2 "	15 "

As times of arrival were frequently uncertain and subject to change at short notice, it was possible to examine only a small percentage of these consignments; two samples of tomatoes were submitted to the County Analyst for a check on the presence of pesticide residues but the amounts detected were not considered to be harmful.

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RODENTS & INSECT PESTS

At present the Council employ only one full-time Rodent Operative, who also assists with drain testing, disinfection and disinfestation, so that with an area of 84 square miles to cover, he is very fully occupied, particularly between October and March.

A free treatment for rats and mice is given to private dwelling houses and other properties are treated at an inclusive charge of 9/- per hour.

Warfarin continues to be used and a careful watch is kept for signs of resistance but no evidence has been found to suggest that it exists in this district.

Inspections - 1969

Properties Inspected.	Agricultural.	Non-Agricultural.	Total.
(a) As the result of notification.	29	206	235
(b) In the course of survey.	256	323	579
(c) No. found to be infested with rats or mice.	93	222	315

Treatments - 1969

Properties treated by the Council's Operative.	Agricultural.	Non-Agricultural.	Total.
	47	182	229

In 75% of agricultural properties surveyed it was found that the owners carried out treatment themselves, using Warfarin.

Test baiting of sewers carried out in Ash, Aylesham and Elvington, revealed evidence in the Aylesham sewers only; this was followed by a poison treatment using zinc phosphide in which twenty-three manholes showed take of bait.

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Insect infestations dealt with during the year were as follows:-

Fleas	8
Cockroaches	11
Flies	4
Bed Bugs	1

An increasing number of complaints are received regarding ants invading houses from the outside, but although advice is always given, up to the present treatment has only been undertaken in special circumstances.

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DISEASES OF ANIMALS (WASTE FOODS) ORDER, 1957.

This is an Order primarily concerned with the protection of animal health, which is enforced in the district under delegation from the County Council. There are at present seven premises holding licences and operating plant and equipment for the boiling of waste food and, although in itself this is not strictly a public health function, we have also an interest in the prevention of nuisance and rat infestation. Thirteen visits were paid during the year.

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HAIRDRESSERS AND BARBERS

There are thirteen Hairdressers and Barbers in the area to which twenty-two visits were made to ensure compliance with the Council's Byelaws under Section 77 of the Public Health Act, 1961.

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